

THE  
SERIES  
OF  
CHRIST'S LIFE,  
Pursuant to the  
Order of Time,  
Drawn into an  
ABRIDGMENT.  
With the Addition of some  
Pious Reflections.

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*Divinas Scripturas sèpiùs lege, imò nunquam de ma-  
nibus tuis sacra lectio deponatur.*

Jeron. Ep. ad Nepotianum.

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Printed in the Year 1752.



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T O  
Mrs. L. K----llys.

Dear Cousin,

THE Memory of our Saviour is held in such Veneration by all Christians, that his Life in Miniature must necessarily be so too. Its native Worth and Value places it above *Encomiums* as well as *Apologies*: Neither stands it in need of a ceremonious Introduction, to usher it into the World, any more than it does of the Protection or Patronage of any one. Thus you see the Nature of the Present, which I make to you in particular, is extreamly different from those which, by flattering Dedications, court the Favour of great Persons, and, in my Judgment, is preferable to those indigent Compliments which beg the charitable Countenance of a Patron. This Picture, or History of Christ, whose Remembrance is so dear and sacred to us, is a Copy taken with all Exactness from an Original, which was drawn by an eminent Hand into the narrow Compass which you see, to the end it might be always present to our Eyes, and consequently settle in our Hearts a true Sense of

*The Dedication.*

what he did and suffer'd for our Sakes. By which means, this Life of his in Miniature, instead of seeking a Patronage, will become our Protector against the seducing Mischiefs of the World. And you, my dear Cousin, I'm sure, will so well serve yourself of the favourable Opportunity, as to reap all the Advantage that is derivable from our Saviour's putting himself, as it were, under your Roof: For, by chusing the best and only necessary Thing, you will secure a Happiness that will never be taken from you, and effectually render this small Piece the most valuable Present that could possibly be made you by,

*Your most affectionate Kinsman,*

*And humble Servant, &c.*



TO

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## TO THE R E A D E R.

THE Reflections you will find here are not in the Nature of a Commentary ; you'll therefore be deceived, if you expect nice or curious Speculations in them. The Reason why they are added to the Abridgment is, to second, in some measure, the Author's pious Intention ; and that the Reader, after Perusal of some Part of Christ's Sacred History, may not depart without such affectionate Impressions remaining in his Mind, as ought to be the Fruit of reading the Holy Gospels : Their Epitome is so very short, as renders it portable without the least Incumbrance, by which means we may always have a Subject with which to entertain our Thoughts most advantageously in our private Walks, or when we are alone. Those who please may form other Reflections or Meditations of their own, more agreeable to themselves, from whence they will reap considerable Advantage.

How-

To the Reader.

However, if these plain and natural Conceptions of the Soul (but so far pathetick as results from a genuine and lively Sense of our Saviour's Words and Actions) are so happy as to be any ways conducive to good Effects, I shall have obtained my Desire, and remain fully satisfied with having offer'd an Employment, in which the Reader will not have lost his Labour.

Farewel.



The

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The S E R I E S  
O F  
Our SAVIOUR's L I F E, &c.

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*The P R E F A C E.*

**A**T your Request, my dear Theophilus, I give to the World this Abridgment of our Saviour's Life in English, which a more eminent Person had some Years ago composed in Latin: And you were of his Opinion, that the Series of our Saviour's Actions, brought into as compendious a Method as is possible, and form'd according to the successive Years of his Age, would be a most useful, as well as a most acceptable, Present to all studious and pious Readers. For, by this means, they may, at one View, behold that Sacred History, which in the Evangelists is not a little confused and intricate. The Order therefore is this: First, his Infancy and Youth, which reaches to his Baptism and Man's Estate; his Time of Manhood we distinguish into those Passages which were the Fore-runners of his Preaching until the first Pascha, and then into his Four Years Preaching and Conversation until his Ascension into Heaven.

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*His INFANCY and YOUTH.*

**A**S soon as the Time appointed was at hand, in which the Eternal Word was to become Incarnate, in the Reign of Herod, Almighty God sent

sent the Angel *Gabriel* to *Zacharias*, to acquaint him, That *Elizabeth* his Wife would be deliver'd of a Son, whose Name should be *John*, and who should be the Precursor of the *Messias*. Six Months after, the same Angel is sent to the Virgin *Mary*, to let her know, That she was to be the Mother of God. When she was with Child, she went to visit her Cousin *Elizabeth*. *John* is born according to the Angel's Prediction, and at his Circumcision receives his Name, and *Zacharias* the Use of his Tongue, who immediately blesseth God.

After this, *Joseph* is told by the Angel, That his Wife is with Child by the Holy Ghost. Some Time after, Christ is born in *Bethlehem*, the 25th of *December*, about Midnight. As was prophetically said, (a) *Whilst all Things a Sap. 18. enjoy'd an undisturb'd Repose, and Midnight Shades had o'erspread the Earth, the Omnipotent Word, darting itself from Heaven, descended from its regal Mansion upon our Earth.* And this miraculous Blessing came to us in the Year 4022 from the Creation of the World, about the 43d of *Augustus Cæsar's Reign*, and the 29th of *Herod, King of the Jews*.

The Birth of Christ is told by Angels to the Shepherds; eight Days after which he is circumcised, and six Days after Circumcision he is adored by the *Magi of the East*, who found him by the wonderful Conduct of a Star. The 20 Days of Purification being expired, he is carried to the Temple of *Jerusalem*.

*Herod* grew enraged at the News of a new-born King of the *Jews*, and therefore ordered the bloody Massacre of all Children within Two Years old. Upon which *Joseph* is admonished by an Angel to fly into *Ægypt* with the Child and his Mother, where they continued 'till the Death of *Herod*, of which

Time, depute some Persons to know of *John* who or what he pretends to be: To which *John* answers, That he is not Christ, but, nevertheless, Christ was amongst them, tho' they knew him not.

The Day after, Jesus being return'd out of the Desart, and going to *John*, Behold, says the Baptist, behold the Lamb of God, (shewing Christ) who takes away the Sins of the World. The next Day he repeats the same Testimony in the hearing of two of his Disciples, and looking on Jesus as he walk'd by. The two Disciples follow'd him, one of which was *Andrew*, who brought his Brother *Simon* also to Jesus. The Day following he went into *Galilee*, where finding *Philip*, he bids him follow, who did so, and, finding out *Nathaniel*, acquaints him that the *Messias* was come, who, doubting the Truth of the Report, went to see, and, being convinced, he also became a Follower of Christ.

The third Day after our Saviour had left the Desart, he went into *Cana of Galilee*, to the Marriage (as is thought) of *Simon the Cananean*, surnamed *Zelotes*, whither he, his Disciples, and his Mother, had been invited; where he miraculously converted Water into Wine. After this, he, with his Mother, Brethren, and Disciples, went to *Capernaum*. From hence, within a few Days after, he went to *Jerusalem*, near the Time of the Jewish Pascha, where he expell'd the Temple the whole Market of Buyers and Sellers, and the Bankers, with their Merchandise.

#### Reflections.

*The marvellous Prognosticks which fore-ran the Birth of our Messias, as well as the wonderful Events that attended it; the Report of a new-born King of the Jews, which had raised such a bloody Jealousy in the Mind of Herod; the convincing Arguments which*

Christ used in the Temple, at twelve Years old, to prove that the Messias was already come; and the great Hopes which the well-disposed World had conceived of a Redeemer; seem'd either to be Fictions and idle Dreams, or to be Things forgotten, and quite extinguished in the Memory of Men, (by a Subjection to his Parents, in which he lived during the Term of almost twenty Years, from the Time that he disputed with the Doctors to their Confusion, and the Satisfaction of all unprejudiced Auditors) until he appeared upon the Banks of Jordan, and was baptized in its Streams by the Holy Precursor.

But the *Ways of Providence*, tho' they are all mysterious, and measur'd by infinite *Wisdom*, yet some profitable Instructions may be drawn from those Beams which dart themselves thro' that *Holy Obscurity*; and there is much Room for serious Thought in that short Summary of twenty Years, express'd in few *Words*, He advanced in Age, *Wisdom*, and *Grace*, with *God and Men*.

Accomplished with these necessary Endowments for a great Master and Teacher, he enters upon the *Theatre of the World*, by being baptiz'd by John, and publish'd to be the *Son of God* by a *Voice from Heaven*. After his Baptism he retires into the *Desart* to fast and pray; in which he continues forty *Days*.

Blush, my Soul, for Shame, to see the *Son of God* fasting and praying for thy *Redemption*, whilst you, unconcern'd for your future *State*, let whole Years pass away without acting in your own behalf with that *Vigour* which is necessary for you, and with that *Zeal* which he practised for your *Instruction*. Wait then, my Soul; wait upon thy *Saviour* in his *Retreat*, and learn of him to fast and pray for thine own *Salvation*: It imports thee extreamly to lay hold of so inviting an Example, if thou wouldest be enabled to overcome the *Temptations of the World*, by a *Love of Heaven* firmly rooted

rooted and established in thee. Behold him fix'd in Contemplation of the Divine Essence, in which all Perfection is display'd after a wonderful Manner. With what Pleasure, what Raptures of Delight is he employ'd in the beatifical Vision, in the Sight of the utmost Felicity of which Human Nature is capable !

Fortify'd with the delightful Knowledge and Contemplation of all that Heaven contains, the Devil assailets him with all the Allurements that his inveterate Malice could invent, but is repul's'd with Shame and Confusion.

You see, my Soul, the Fruits of Prayer and Fasting, and would feel the Pleasure too if thou didst but imitate thy Saviour. Yield then no longer to the Amusements of the World, but strengthen thyself against them with a serious and vigorous Application of thy Thoughts to the Contemplation and Love of thy only true Felicity. The Baptist points out to thee the Lamb of God ; follow him with thy whole Affection, that thy Sins also may be taken away : He calls upon thee to leave the dangerous Course of Life which will precipitate thee into eternal Misery. Make haste, my Soul, and obey the Invitation ; see with what Readiness Philip goes after him, and charitably engages Nathaniel into this happy Society. Lose not this favourable Moment which thou mayst improve to thy eternal Happiness, and from henceforth become a diligent Follower and Disciple of thy Lord and God.

In Cana of Galilee thou mayst behold his first Miracle ; and, if thy Faith by such Objects acquire a more lively Vigour, thou wilt soon behold as great a Miracle wrought upon thyself, by the happy Change of thy Condition, from a Lover of the World to a Lover of Heaven.

And now, my Soul, that thou art engaged in the Service of thy Lord, wait upon him to the Temple of Jerusalem ; see with what Zeal he turns out those who abuse the

*House of Prayer, by turning it into a Place of Traffick. Examine thyself, my Soul, the Nature of thy Affections at all Times; but be sure to carry none with you into those sacred Places that are not only free from temporal Engagements, but full of that Piety and Love of Heaven which may preserve thee from being expell'd his Holy Temples, and carry thee to the Eternal Mansions of the Blessed.*

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*The first Year of Christ's Preaching from the First Pascha, which succeeded his Baptism, to the Second.*

**D**URING this first *Pascha* Christ preach'd in *Jerusalem*, and many believed in him, by reason the Miracles which he wrought. At the same Time *Nichodenus*, a Prince of the *Jews*, almost convinced of the Truth of what he heard, came to our Saviour by Night, to be farther instructed. From *Jerusalem* he went into *Juda*a with his Disciples, where they remain'd baptising. *John* also was baptising in *Ænon*, His Disciples baptised, nee Christ. near *Salim*. *John's* Disciples, seeing what Multitudes follow'd Christ, complain'd of it to him. *John* reproved them for it, and gave them to understand that Christ was the *Messias*, not he, and that Christ's Power must increase, and his own be diminish'd.

Not long after, *Herod*, the Tetrarch, being reprimanded by *John*, upon the Account of *Herodias*, commits the Baptist to Prison. Upon this News, Christ departed out of *Judea* into *Galilee*. *Samaria* lying in his Way, he pass'd thro' it, and came to a City of that Country, call'd *Sychar*, near that Parcel of Ground which *Jacob* gave to his Son *Joseph*, and in it was *Jacob's-Well*. Wearied with

his Journey, Jesus repos'd himself on the Side of this Well. Whilst he rested himself, comes the *Samaritan Woman*, to whom he manifestly makes appear that he is *Christ, the Messias*: In convincing her, and preaching to the People, who flock'd about him, he spent two Days. When two Days more were expir'd, he departed thence, and return'd to *Galilee*, where he was honourably receiv'd, and his Doctrine admir'd by all the Country; about which the Fame of it was spread, as well as of himself. After this he went into *Cana of Galilee*, where he had wrought his first Miracle, when he changed Water into Wine: Here he cured a certain *Lord's Son*, who was sick of a Fever.

Two Days after he departed from *Cana*, and, declining the City of *Nazareth*, came to *Capernaum*. From hence he return'd into *Galilee*, thro' which he travell'd preaching. At the Sea-Side he calls *Peter* and *Andrew*, *James* also and *John*, who, astonished at the Miracle of taking so many Fish as almost sunk both their Ships, left their Nets and followed him. With these in his Company, he went into *Capernaum*, a City of *Galilee*, and enters the Synagogue, where all were struck with Amazement at his Doctrine, and at the Authority wherewith he spoke. Here he cured a Man who was posses'd with a Devil; and at *Simon's* House he cures his Wife's Mother, who lay sick of a violent Fever. His Fame spreading more and more, the whole City gather'd about him as he stood at *Simon's* Door, where he healed very many, the Devils who where cast forth crying out and saying, Thou art *Christ, the Son of God*. Next Morning very early he went out of *Capernaum* into a solitary Place, and there prayed, where *Simon*, and they who were with him, found him out, and told him that the People were seeking for him; to which he answered, that he was to preach

the Kingdom of God to other Towns and Cities also : So, pursuing his Intent, he travell'd about all *Galilee*, preaching the Gospel and healing all Sorts of Infirmitiess.

Jesus, seeing great Multitudes press about him, passeth to the other side of the Sea of *Galilee*, where, as he was walking, a certain Scribe desired to be admitted into the Number of his Disciples, but was repulsed : Some others he bid follow him, but they excused themselves upon several Pretences. Another Day about Evening, repassing the Sea with his Disciples, in Company of other Boats, he being asleep, a sudden furious Tempest of Wind arose, which so enraged the Sea, that the Boats were violently toss'd about, and filled with the Water, so that the Danger of perishing was very manifest ; but, when Christ commanded the Storm to cease, it immediately obeyed, and a great Calm ensued, to the Admiratio-  
n of all. When he was landed, he dispossess'd two *Demoniacks* of the *Geraseni*, permitting the Devils to enter the Swine, and precipitate themselves into the Sea.

The next Morning he returned to *Capernaum*, where, whilst he was teaching from within Doors the Multitude of People who crowded to hear him, a Man sick of the Palsey, carried by four, not being able to get thro' the Crowd, was let down from the Top of the House into the Room where Christ was teaching, who forgave him his Sins, to the Scandal of the Pharisees, and then cured him of his Infirmitiy before their Eyes. Going from hence to the Sea-Side, follow'd by Multitudes of People, whom he taught as he went along, in his way he saw *Matthew*, a Publican, at the Receipt of Custom, whom he bid follow him, who imediately left all and did so. Whilst he is at the Feast which *Matthew* prepared for him, he instructs the Disciples of *John*, and the

Pharisees: The first found Fault with his Disciples for not fasting, the other were scandaliz'd at his eating with Publicans and Sinners. As he was teaching, and answering their Questions, *Jairus*, a chief Ruler of the Synagogue, came to him, and fell at his Feet, beseeching him to save his only Daughter's Life, who lay dying: He went with him, accompanied with a mighty Throng of People: In his way he heal'd a Woman who was diseas'd with an Issue of Blood, and after that restored the Daughter of *Jairus* to Life. Going from thence, two blind Men followed him, crying out, Son of *David*, have Mercy upon us; on which he gave them their Sight: After this a dumb Man was brought to him possest with a Devil, which he cast out. The Multitude, amazed at it, cried out, Never was the like done in *Israel*.

### Reflections.

*Christ now appears like the glorious Planet of the Day, enlightening our dark ignorant World with his admirable Doctrine, and with his Miracles forcing Assent from the most Stupid.*

*Nothing from henceforth will be able to resist the Divine Influence but the most perverse Dispositions and the most inveterate Malice: He will cure all Infirmities of the Body, and will cast out Devils; but Perverseness and Malice are almost every where incurable. Our Saviour confines not his Abode to the City of Jerusalem, but travels from Place to Place, pouring forth the Effects of his Divine Goodness upon all who were disposed to receive it. At Jacob's-Well he discourses with the Woman of Samaria, and says such Things to her as makes her give entire Credit, and publish him to be the Messias. There he spends two Days in teaching the People, who flock'd in Multitudes to hear him.*

him. Tho' he seem'd to have made choice of this Place to rest in, the Event shews that it was for no other Purpose than to lay hold of an Opportunity of doing good. Wheresoever he went he charitably healed their Infirmitiess, and instructed them in the Way to Salvation. Multitudes of People believed in him, and the very Devils proclaimed him to be Christ, the Son of God.

Be not tired, my Soul, with following thy Saviour from City to City, and from one Province to another, who is never wearied with travelling for thy Sake, and doing thee the most essential Good thou canst possibly receive: He is perpetually teaching us how to be truly happy; and who can resist the Authority of his Words and Miracles? What poor Excuses did they make for themselves whom Christ invited to follow him? and with what Shame and Confusion will they, and all those, appear at the last Day, who have had a parallel Invitation, and, instead of Obedience, returned their Excuse, when they behold what Happiness they have lost, and for how mean Considerations they lost it? Thou, my Soul, art better resolved than to look back, unless it be with Shame and Compassion upon those who do so. Canst thou behold thy Lord and Saviour labouring indefatigably here for thine eternal Repose hereafter without being deeply sensible of his Sufferings, and chained inseparably to him with a like Affection? And, when thou considerest that this same God, whom thou hast accompanied here in Sufferings and Calamities, will be a perpetual Object of Happiness to thee hereafter, and that thy constant and inviolable Affection has been the Occasion of it, with what Pleasure wilt thou look upon thy former Travels! with what Raptures contemplate that dear Object of thy Love, no longer despised, no longer persecuted, but, in full Mæesty and Glory, repaying thine Affection with one much greater than it!

What

What will not a Hellish Spleen, and a perverse Mind, do in 'spite of Truth and the Evidence of the greatest Miracles? The Pharisees, that precise, hypocritical Race of Men, were scandalized at Christ's forgiving Sins, tho' confirmed with a Miracle. Good God! forgive me mine, I beseech thee: Do but say the Word, and I am whole. Jesu, Son of David, have Mercy on me. I'm convinced, I steadfastly believe, that thou art the Son of the Everliving God, and that the like was never done in Israel. Jesu, Son of David, have Mercy on me.

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*The second Year of his Preaching, from the second Pascha 'till the third after his Baptism.*

After this, Jesus went up to the Feast of the *Pascha*, where, at the Pond called *Probatica*, he cured the Man who had been infirm eight and thirty Years, which, being done on the Sabbath, gives Offence to the Jews; which Fact Christ justifies, with many Arguments, to their Confusion, but increases their Malice and Hatred of him.

From this Place going with his Disciples thro' the Corn-Fieldson the Sabbath, they, being hungry, pluck'd some Ears of Corn to eat, first rubbing them in their Hands; and within a while after, on another Sabbath, he heal'd a Man's Hand which was withered: Both which Actions scandalized the Pharisees, and they found Fault with both; but Christ justified them, and confuted all their Arguments.

For which Reason they endeavoured his Destruction, and plotted with the *Herodians* how to effect it; but Christ, knowing their wicked Intentions, withdrew himself from thence to the Sea; whither being followed by vast Multitudes of People from several Parts, who, desirous to be cured of their

Maladies, pressed to touch him, (and as many as did so were healed) he, to avoid the Throng, went into a Ship, from whence he preached to them; and as many as had unclean Spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, *Thou art the Son of God.*

Some Time after, leaving the Multitudes that followed him, he went up into a Mountain to pray; in which Employment he continued all Night: The next Day he made choice of twelve of his Disciples, whom he called Apostles, and at the same Time gave them Power to heal Sickneses, and cast out Devils. Afterwards he spoke a long Sermon to them and the People who flock'd about him, which contains the whole Sum of Christian Perfection, and is called, *Our Lord's Sermon in the Mountain.*

When he had ended his Sermon, to the Admiration of all that heard him, he came down from the Mountain, and healed a Man sorely afflicted with a Leprosy, who, prostrating himself, besought him to make him clean. This Man publishing every where the Mercy he had received, Multitudes of People came after Christ, to be cured of their Infirmities; but he retired into the Desart to pray. Afterwards he went into *Capernaum*, where he cured a *Centurion's Servant*, who lay ready to die of a Palsey. Going from hence, he went to the City of *Nain*, at the Gate of which he met a dead Man carried out to be buried: He was the only Son of a Widow of that Place, whom he saw weeping over her Son. Moved with Compassion at her Sorrow, he restored her Son to Life; at which all People were struck with Fear and Amazement, glorifying God for raising a Prophet amongst them.

*John's Disciples, reporting these miraculous Deeds*

Deeds to him, as he lay in Prison, he sends two of them to him to know if he was the *Messias*: He satisfies their Demand, and takes Occasion to commend *John* when his Messengers were gone. He complains to the Multitude about him of the *Jews'* Impenitence, but chiefly those of *Chorazin*, *Bethsaida*, and *Capernaum*. *Simon*, the Pharisee, inviting Christ to eat with him, he went and sat down. In the mean time came *Mary Magdalen*, a notorious Sinner, who, kneeling at his Feet, wash'd them with Tears of Sorrow, wiped them with the Hair of her Head, and anointed them with sweet Ointment. The Pharisee was startled at it in his Mind; but Christ, penetrating his Thoughts, justified what the Woman did to him, and pardon'd her Sins, because her Love and Faith were great.

Being at *Capernaum*, a Man was brought to him possessed with a blind and mute Devil, whom he healed; but the Pharisees, calumniating this Deed, said that it was done in the Name of *Beelzebub*; which Calumny Christ refuted to their Shame and Confusion, insomuch that a certain Woman, who heard him, cry'd out, *Blessed is the Womb that bare thee, &c.*

In the mean time his Relations ran to seize him, as if he were distracted. When it was told him that his Kindred were there, his Answer was, That those who did the Will of God were really his Kindred.

The same Day, when many People were met together from several Cities, he went out of the House, and sat by the Sea-Side, where he began to preach to them again; but, greater Multitudes coming in, he went into a Ship, from whence he spake to the People (who stood on the Shore to hear him) the Parable of the Word likened to Seed which was sowed, some falling in the Highway, some

some in stoney Ground, and some amongst Thorns. When the People were gone, he explained this Parable to his Disciples. At other Times he discoursed to the Multitude in the several Parables of the Mustard-Seed, the Leaven, the Treasure, the Merchant seeking good Pearls, and the Net cast into the Sea ; all which he explain'd to his Disciples.

When Jesus had finished these Parables, he went to *Nazareth*, the Place where he was bred, and where the People, being scandaliz'd at his Discourse, turn'd him out of their City. From hence he went thro' the Towns of *Galilee*, the Women whom he had heal'd supplying him with Necessaries.

Christ finding the Harvest of Souls to increase, and the Labourers but few, designing to send his Apostles abroad, he instructs them in what they were to do, and how to behave themselves ; who, according to the Power and Instructions which were given them, went and preach'd to the World, healing and anointing with Oil those who were infirm. In the mean while Jesus himself travels thro' *Galilee*, preaching the Gospel. The Fame of Christ reaching *Herod's* Ears, he began to fear lest *John*, whom he had put to Death, was revived ; which made him desire to see Christ, who therefore withdrew himself from thence.

The Apostles being return'd from preaching, he takes them along with him into a Desart on the other Side the Sea of *Galilee*, where he feeds above five thousand People with five Loaves and two Fishes. About the Evening he bid his Disciples cross the Sea to *Capernaum* ; and, when he had dismiss'd the People, he went up into the Mountain alone to pray. Mean while, it being dark, and the Sea growing high, by reason of a tempestuous Wind, which at last reduced the Apostles in the Ship to extream Danger, Jesus came to the Shore, and, seeing

seeing them tug hard at their Oars, but to no Purpose, the fourth Watch being come, he walked to them on the Sea, which put them into a new Terror, imagining they saw a Spirit ; but he quickly cured them of that Mistake, and made the Tempest cease, bringing them safe ashore.

Debarking on the Coast of *Genesareth*, People came thronging to him from many Places to be cured, and even those, who did but touch the Border of his Garment, were made whole. The Day following, when the People saw that neither Jesus nor his Disciples were there, they went into the Boats, and cross'd the Sea to *Capernaum*, where finding Jesus, they said to him, *Rabbi*, when camest thou hither ? who, answering, reproved them for seeking him merely because he had fed them the Day before ; from whence he takes Occasion to teach them that he himself was the Bread of Life, and that his Body and Blood were to be eaten and drank.

### Reflections.

*Christ is ever busied in healing our Infirmitie*s wheresoever he goes : *Multitudes flock after him, to receive the Benefit of his miraculous Cures. But he is no less pursued by the Malice of the Jews than by the People who resort to him. His very doing good is a Crime, because on the Sabbath ; a Crime for which they contrive Ways and Means to put him to Death. All the disaffected World conspire his Ruin, who, at the same Time, bends all his Endeavours to render Mankind happy.*

*Learn, my Soul, this admirable Lesson of returning Good for Evil. Altho' we shun him by our Fondness of the World, tho' we express an Aversion to him in all our careless Actions, tho' we manifest a real*

Contempt of his Doctrine by our sinful Courses, he still pursues the Business of our Salvation ; he dissuades us from those Deeds which are most pernicious, by kindly representing to us the Malignity of their Nature ; and he encourages us to embrace our own true Good here, by faithful Assurances of much greater hereafter. This, my Soul, thy Saviour puts in Practice before thine Eyes, with such a tender Zeal for thy Instruction, as nothing can excuse thee from being sensibly touch'd with such Effects of Goodness towards thee. But know also, that, by imitating so fair Examples of Charity for his Sake, who has done so much for thine, thy Happiness in Heaven will be compleat ; so infinitely good he is, that he suffers not the least good Act of ours to pass without its Recompence.

Mingle thyself still with the Multitudes that throng about him, not so much to be cured of thy Bodily Infirmities, as to be healed of those of thy rational Part. Let therefore his Divine Sermons sink deep into thee, and take such Root as no Worldly Temptations shall ever be able to pluck them out. Behold with what Humanity and Compassion he succours the Distressed that either come to him for Relief, or whom he finds to stand in need of his Assistance. Doubt not then, my Soul, that he will distinguish thee from amongst the Croud, if thy Tears are real and unfeigned, and afford thee his charitable Aid to raise thee from that mortal Infirmity in which Sin makes thee miserably languish, that thou also may'st glorify thy God, and thy most merciful Saviour. Weep then, my Soul, with the pious Magdalen ; let a River of true penitential Tears pour themselves out at the Feet of thy Redeemer, and cease not 'till he has pronounced thy Pardon : When thou hast obtained that inestimable Jewel, set that Value upon it which it deserves, for it will purchase Heaven for thee.

Let not a vile, mercenary Interest of this World be any

any Inducement to follow and seek out Christ. The Hopes of being again fed by our Saviour was the Motive which led the giddy People to find him out, from whose miraculous Bounty they had eaten, the Day before, in a plentiful Manner. Let the Hopes of Heaven, that is, of enjoying Christ eternally, carry thee, my Soul, in search of him, or rather never absent thyself from his loved Company; let him be the Object of thy Hopes, and of thy Affections here, who is to be the Object of thy Happiness hereafter.

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*The Third Year of his Preaching, from the  
Third Year after his Baptism, until the  
Fourth.*

THIS Pascha Christ either did not go to Jerusalem, because the Jews plotted to kill him, or else he presently return'd from thence into Galilee; for the Holy Text expresses it not. Here the Scribes and Pharisees found fault with him, because his Disciples did not wash their Hands before they eat, as they were commanded to do by their Traditions; which Christ answers by turning their Argument against themselves. Going from hence to the Coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he heals the Daughter of a Canaanian Woman, who was possess'd with a Devil; and, returning from thence thro' the Midst of Decapolis to the Sea of Galilee, he cures many infirm People, and amongst the rest one that was deaf and dumb; at which the Multitude wondered, and glorified the God of Israel.

The People, whom these Miracles had drawn together, being increased to the Number of 4000, and having been three Days without eating, Christ took Compassion on them, and, before he dismiss'd them, fed them with seven Loaves and a few small

Fishes, 'till they fill'd themselves. After which Miracle, he went into the Country of *Magedan* and *Dalmanutha*, where the Pharisees and Sadduces came to him, and desired he would shew them a Sign from Heaven. But he, knowing the Falseness of their Hearts, and reproaching their Hypocrify and Wickedness, leaves them, and sails to the other Side of the Water, where his Disciples coming to him, he charges them to beware of the Leaven of the Sadduces, Pharisees, and of the Herodians; by which he meant their Doctrine. Being come to *Bethsaida*, he restores Sight to a Blind Man, who was brought to him out of the Town.

From this Place Christ went with his Disciples to *Cæsarea Philippi*, where he examines *Peter* touching his Faith, and praises him for it, since it was not reveal'd to him by Flesh and Blood. Thou art *Peter*, said he, and upon this Rock will I build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. Soon after he foretells them his Passion and Death, which he must undergo at *Jerusalem*. Then calling the Multitude to him, he tells them that all those, who will follow him, must undergo their Cross. Eight Days after, he went into a Mountain to pray, with *Peter*, *John*, and *James*, in his Company, and was transfigured before them. Descending from thence, he cast the Devil out of the Lunatic, which his Disciples had attempted in vain; for which he rebuked their Want of Faith. Passing from thence into *Galilee*, he once more foretells his Passion and Resurrection; the Meaning of which they did not well comprehend, but, nevertheless, they were much afflicted. When they were come to *Capernaum*, the Receiver of the Tribute-Money came to demand Tribute, which was miraculously paid with Money taken by *Peter* out of a Fish's Mouth. From whence a Contest rose amongst

amongst them about the Primacy ; which Ambition of theirs he carefully represseth, by taking a little Child to him, and telling what Regard ought to be had to them ; how nearly it concerns us to become innocent like them ; and the dismal Consequences that follow those who scandalize little Children ; Woe to those by whom these Scandals come. When he had said many Things to this Effect, he commanded us to forgive those who had offended or finned against us, bringing the Comparison of a King taking an Account of his Servants.

The Feast of the Tabernacles being at hand, he refused to accompany his Brethren thither, by reason of their Incredulity ; but he went afterwards in private. As he went to *Jerusalem*, he pass'd thro' the Midst of *Samaria* ; there he met with a *Samaritan*, and nine others, who were Lepers, whom he healed, notwithstanding the People of that Country had refused him Lodging : From whence he takes Occasion to reprimand his Disciples for their Desire of Revenge, and praised the *Samaritan*, who alone gave Thanks to God, when he saw that he was healed, the rest ungratefully went away.

In the Midst of the Feast of the Tabernacles, Jesus enter'd *Jerusalem*, and went up into the Temple, teaching with so much Efficacy, as struck the *Jews* with Admiration ; and the Messengers, whom they sent to apprehend him, were themselves so vanquish'd with the Things they heard him speak, that they returned without Power to execute their Commission. *Never Man spoke like this Man* was their Answer to the Chief-Priests and Pharisees, who had sent them on that Errand. Many of the People also believed on him. In the Evening he retired to Mount *Olivet*, and, early the next Morning, return'd to the Temple, where all the People

People resorted to him ; and he sat down and taught them. Whilst he was teaching, the Scribes and Pharisees maliciously brought to him a Woman taken in Adultery, whom he delivers out of their Hands, by writing on the Earth with his Finger ; and, when they were all gone who accused her, he dismiss'd her with pardoning her Sins. Hence he takes Occasion to instruct the People who he is, and who the *Jews* are, whether *Abraham* is their Father or the Devil ; which so enraged the *Jews*, that they took up Stones to throw at him ; but he escaped untouched. Soon after, as he was going along, he meets a Man who was blind from his Birth, whom he cures on the Sabbath by putting Clay, mix'd with Spittle, on his Eyes, and bidding him wash in the Pool of *Siloe*. The Pharisees hearing this grew more incensed against him, and, lest any one should confess him to be Christ, they used Threats, and conspired to throw any one out of the Synagogue that should do so. Jesus, after that, meeting the blind Man whom he had cured, and asking him if he believed in the Son of God, he said, Lord, I believe, and, falling down, adored him. Then he discoursed at large about the good Shepherd and the Hireling, and about his Sheep. Many of his Auditors said he had a Devil, and was mad ; but others, that these were not Words of one possess'd with a Devil ; can a Devil open the Eyes of the Blind ?

Leaving *Jerusalem*, he chose 72 Disciples, whom he sent two and two before him into every City and Place whither himself was to come, giving them almost the same Instructions which he before had given to his Apostles. At their Return, he teaches them a modest Behaviour, and gives Thanks to God.

After this, he teaches a certain arrogant Lawyer who

who is his Neighbour, by the Example of the good *Samaritan*. Christ, in the Journey he was going, was entertain'd kindly by *Martha*, at her House, but prefers the Leisure of her Sister *Mary* to the Solicitude and careful Pains of *Martha*, tho' taken for his Sake and his Disciples, in preparing something for them to eat. Some Days after, at the Request of his Disciples, he taught them how to pray, setting them a Form of it, by saying, *Our Father*, &c. and he chiefly recommends to them Affiduity and Perseverance in Prayer.

Whilst he was discoursing on this Subject, a certain Pharisee invited him to Dinner, where he reproaches the preposterous Care of Cleanliness used by the Pharisees, accuses them of Hypocrisy and other Crimes, very often pronouncing Woe to them. Then a Lawyer interrupting him, who thought himself injured, was treated with the same Severity, laying many Crimes to their Charge, and repeating many Woes to them. Then addressing himself to his Disciples, he forewarns them of the Leaven of the Pharisees, which is Hypocrisy, and gives them other profitable Instructions at the same Time. One of the Multitude, who heard these Things, called out to him to divide his Brother's Inheritance betwixt them, which he refusing, takes Occasion to dissuade People from being solicitous about Temporal Affairs; for which Purpose he brought many Arguments, advising all Men to be prepared for their last Hour.

At this same Time there were some present who told him of the *Galileans*, whom *Pilate* had put to Death, and whose Blood he had mingled with their Sacrifices. From this that happen'd to the *Galileans*, he takes an Occasion to invite them all to do Pennance, lest they should be cut down as the barren Fig-tree was.

One Sabbath, whilst he was teaching in the Synagogue, he saw a Woman, who, thro' Infirmity, had been bow'd 18 Years to that Degree, that she was not able to look upwards in the least, and call'd her to him, and cured her, so that she immediately went upright. The Ruler of the Synagogue being mad at this, endeavoured to incense the People against him; but our Saviour's Answer made all his Adversaries blush with Shame and Confusion, whilst all the People rejoyc'd at the Things which he so gloriously perform'd.

About this Time was kept the Feast of the Dedication in *Jerusalem*, it being Winter. Jesus walk'd in *Solomon's Porch*, belonging to the Temple; the *Jews* gathered about him, and maliciously ask'd him, Why he would not plainly tell them whether he was Christ? The Answer he gave provok'd them to apprehend him; but he escap'd their Fury. Then he went beyond *Jordan*, and staid where *John* at first baptised, teaching and healing: And the People said that all was true that *John* spake of this Man, and many believed in him. From this Place he travelled thro' the Cities and Villages towards *Jerusalem*; and being ask'd whether the Number of those that were to be saved was few, he reply'd, and bid them endeavour to enter in at the strait Gate, for, when it was once shut, they would call and knock in vain, and then their State would be very miserable. The same Day the Pharisees spitefully admonish'd him to have a care of *Herod*. He answer'd, that he was to suffer Death in *Jerusalem*, (and thereupon reproaches the Cruelty of that City, for killing the Prophets, and stoning those who are sent to her) notwithstanding the tender Care he had taken of her, comparing it to that of a Hen to her Chickens.

Invited to Dinner by the Chief of the Pharisees.  
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on the Sabbath, he cures a Man who was ill of a Dropsy. Knowing that his Action had scandalized the Pharisee, he justifies it by their own Practice in taking an Ass or Ox out of a Ditch on the Sabbath.

After which he teaches, that Guests ought not to be ambitious of the first Place at Table ; and that the Rich were not to be invited, but the Poor and Sickly. To this he jubjoins the Parable of the magnificent Supper ; to which those, who were invited, excuse themselves from coming, upon several Pretexts. Then he shews how much is required from him who will be his Disciple, by the Example of one designing to build a Tower.

The Scribes and Pharisees, murmuring because he entertain'd and convers'd with Sinners, are answered by three Parables, of the lost Sheep, of the lost Drachma or Groat, and of the Prodigal Son. Then he inveighs against their Avarice, and admonishes them to be charitable ; to confirm which, he introduces the Examples of the wasteful Steward, and the rich Miser.

The Pharisees crowding about him, he cures and teaches the People in their Presence ; and (as their cavilling Custom was so) now they started a Question about the Case of Divorce betwixt Man and Wife : To which he gives a full Answer, and speaks of the State of Celibacy. Then (by way of Parable of the unjust Judge) Jesus admonisheth them to be diligent and stedfast in Prayer. There being certain Persons by, who set a Value upon themselves, as being just, and despised others, Christ addresses to them the Parable of the proud Pharisee and the Publican. The People crowding about with their Children, to the end that Christ should lay his Hands upon them, his Disciples chid them for so doing ; but he called them to him, displeased with what his Disciples did, and, embracing them, laid

his Hands on them. As he was travelling on, a young Man, who was a Ruler, came running after, and, kneeling, ask'd what he should do to gain Eternal Life. Christ bid him keep the Commandments: To which the young Man answ'red, that he had kept them all from his Youth. But, when Jesus bid him sell all he had and give to the Poor, he was struck to the Heart, and went away. Upon this, our Saviour told his Disciples how difficult a Thing it was for the Rich to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, and how great their Felicity would be who abandon'd all for the Love of Christ. At the same Time, as an Instruction to his Disciples, he tells them the Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard; by which he gave them to understand, that the earliest Labourers would not always be the most happy in Heaven; but that the Degree of Happiness was proportioned to the Merits of each.

Being yet on the Borders of *Judea*, he is told that *Lazarus* was sick, and when he heard that he was dead, he went into *Bethania*, where he raises him to Life after he had been deceas'd four Days, and in his Grave. At which Miracle many of the *Jews* believed in him, but others went to the Pharisees, and told them what Things *Jesus* did. Whereupon they debated what they should do with him, and determin'd to have him put to Death.

*Jesus* therefore appeared no more publicly among the *Jews*, but retired thence into the City *Ephraim*, near the Wilderness, and there continu'd with his Disciples.

The *Jews' Pascha* drawing near, and he not being there, the People, who were gone before, were asking one another what they thought of his Absence; at the same Time both the Chief-Priests and Pharisees had given Command to have him apprehended. Nevertheless, he resolved to go to *Jerusalem*,

*Jerusalem*, and in the Way foretold his Disciples that he was to be crucify'd and put to Death, but that he also should rise again from Death. Hearing this, the two Sons of *Zebedee*, believing that his Kingdom was nigh, desire to be placed on each Hand of him in Heaven. This Ambition of *James* and *John* moved the rest of the Apostles to great Indignation; but Christ teaches them Humility.

Jesus, travelling on towards *Jerusalem*, enters *Jericho*, where *Zacheus*, a rich Publican, and one of their Chief, entertains him very hospitably at his House, and is so happy as to hear from our Saviour's Mouth that Salvation was come to his Family, and heard immediately from the same Mouth the Parable of the Servants to whom their Lord left Ten Pounds to traffic withal against his Return. Going out of *Jericho*, he gives Sight to blind *Bar-timeus*. Then Jesus came to *Bethania*, six Days before the *Pascha*; and, the next Day, he supp'd in the House of *Simon* the Leper. *Lazarus*, who had been raised from Death, was one who sat at Table with him. *Martha* waited on them, and *Mary*, in the mean Time, anointed our Saviour's Head and Feet, at which his Disciples murmur'd, but chiefly *Judas* the Traytor: Christ gently pacifies them. Many *Jews*, hearing that he was there, came to see *Lazarus*, whom he had raised from the Dead; many of whom returned, and believed in Jesus; but the Chief-Priests most inhumanly consulted to kill both Christ and *Lazarus*.

The Day following, (that is, on the Lord's-Day) when they drew near *Jerusalem*, Christ, riding on an Ass, went from Mount *Olivet* to *Jerusalem*, the People all the Way shouting, *Hosannah* to the Son of *David*! adding a thousand Benedic-tions to him who came in the Name of the Lord. The Pharisees, swell'd with Rancour and Malice,

to see all the World follow him with Acclamations of Joy, and at the little Success which their bloody Designs had met withal, bid him call to the Multitude to cease their Noise ; to whom he answered, that, if they held their Peace, the very Stones would cry out and speak. As he drew near the City, he wept over it, and foretold its Destruction.

Christ, being enter'd the City, went into the Temple, where he turn'd out the Buyers and Sellers, and overturn'd the Bankers' Tables. He healed the Blind and the Lame who came to him, and puts to Silence the enraged Pharisees. Whilst they were in this Fury, certain *Gentiles* desired to see Jesus ; at which Time a Voice from Heaven was heard, saying, *I both have glorify'd my Name, and will glorify it again.* The People, astonish'd at the dreadful Noise, were of divers Opinions about it ; some believed it Thunder, others that it was the Voice of an Angel : Upon which he makes a Discourse to them. Many of the Chief-Rulers were convinced, and believed in him, but, for fear of the Pharisees, did not dare to confess him. In the Evening, he, with the Twelve, went out of the City into *Bethania*, and remain'd there 'till next Morning, which was Monday, and then return'd to the City ; but, in his Way, seeing a Fig-Tree with Leaves on, but no Fruit, he gave it his Malediction, and it immediately withered away and died. Being come into the Temple, he preached and taught there ; but the Chief-Priests, the Scribes, and Princes of the People, instead of being moved by his Doctrine, became more incensed and provoked to his Destruction, but could not as yet invent what to do to him. In the Evening Christ went again out of the City, with his Disciples. In their Way, Christ exhorts them to have Faith, and

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be stedfast in it, and also to forgive their Enemies before they pray'd.

The next Day, being Tuesday, he returned to *Jerusalem*, and was teaching in the Temple. The Chief-Priests, the Scribes, and Elders, demanding of him by what Authority he did so, he reply'd by asking them another Question, which they not daring to answer, became silent. Then he proposed some Parables to them, foretelling the Translation of God's Kingdom from the *Jews* to the *Gentiles*.

These Things heightened the *Jewish* Anger, but, not daring to lay Hands upon him, by reason of the People, they endeavoured to trap him in his Speech, whereby they might lay some plausible Accusation to his Charge. For which Purpose they sent some to ask him some cross, untoward Questions, about paying Tribute to *Cæsar*, about Marriage after the Resurrection, and about the Great Commandment in the Law. But, having perfectly silenced them by the Answers he gave, he ask'd them a Question about Christ, whether he was the Son of *David* or not, which he put so home to them, that, for the future, they gave over asking him any more Questions.

Then Jesus spake to the Multitude and to his Disciples, and bid them observe and do whatsoever the Scribes and Pharisees taught them, because they sit in the Chair of *Moses*, but not imitate their Works; upon which he inveighs bitterly against their Vices, with Redoublements of Woe to them. After which Sermon, sitting over-against the Treasury, he extols the poor Widow's Charity, and prefers her poor Mite to the Gifs of rich Men.

Jesus going out of the Temple in the Evening, his Disciples came to him, to desire he would view that stately Pile, whose wonderful Structure, Ornaments, and Materials, they themselves admired.

To which he answered, that a Time would come when it should all be destroy'd. Then going to Mount *Olivet*, and seating himself over-against the Temple, he tells them what Sufferings they must undergo, and how they were to behave themselves in them ; what Signs will fore-run the Consummation as well of *Jerusalem* as of the whole World : But, at the same Time, he gives them to understand, that the Time of his coming is uncertain ; for which Reason they must be vigilant, and upon the Watch, which he manifests by the Parables of the Ten Virgins and the Trading Servants, which he closeth with a Description of the Universal Judgment.

Wednesday in the Morning, he acquaints them that the *Pascha* was to be kept two Days after, and foretells that he was to be betray'd and crucify'd. In the mean Time, the Chief-Priests, Scribes, and Elders, assembled themselves in the Palace of the High-Priest, to consult which Way to put their villainous Intent in Execution. Very seasonably for their wicked Purpose, comes *Judas Iscariot*, and proffers to betray his Master, and deliver him into their Hands, for Thirty Pieces of Silver paid down, which he received immediately, and left them, full of his intended Devilish Work.

Lastly, On Thursday Christ sends two of his Disciples to prepare the *Pascha* for him, giving them the Token by which they should know the Man of the House where he would eat the *Pascha*. You'll meet him, said he, carrying a Pitcher of Water.

Now comes the Fourth *Pascha* of Christ's Preaching, in which he suffer'd Death ; so that, from his Baptism until this Time, Three full Years and Three Months were run out.

## Reflections.

And is it true, my Soul, that thy Lord and Saviour is *restlessly* taking Pains for thy Happiness, omits no Occasion to convince thee of the undoubted Truth and Sincerity of his Doctrine, foretells his Death and Manner of it, and is readily disposed to yield himself a Sacrifice, as an utmost Testimony of his tender Affection to thee, whilst thou, ungrateful thou, for all these Favours and Mercies, blind to thine own true Good and Interest, and insensible of thy future Condition, canst not yet abandon the World's false Allurements, canst not yet see the Nature of thy Felicity, nor examine how much it imports thee to have thy future State always before thine Eyes? Or was it a slight Testimony of God's Goodness to thee, to send his only Son into this unbelieving and ungrateful World, expose him to infinite Crosses, to the Scorn, Indignities, and most bloody Insults of an inhuman People, for no other Purpose than to teach thee how to be for ever happy? Or is thy eternal Beatitude an *Affair* of so little Consequence as to be neglected?

Beware, my Soul, beware betimes of the *Falshood, Hypocrisy, and Hard-heartedness* of the Sadduces, and of the Pharisees, and of the Herodians. Their *Doctrine*, like their *Devotion*, is all *Counterfeit*, is all *Dissimulation*, and is all *Pride* at the Bottom. Christ teaches us to be *sincere* in our *Belief*, as well as in our *Actions*. He teaches a *Piety* to *Heaven* that is accompanied with *Humility* and *Prudence*, not *Bigotry* and *Arrogance*. And he teaches us to love him, because, in doing so, we shall meet with *eternal Felicity*, which undoubtedly is our greatest and only *Interest*. He is our *Life* and *Resurrection*. In him then let us repose our *Confidence*; let us observe, and lay up in our *Hearts*, his *Holy Lessons* and Exam-

plies. We must therefore cease to be ambitious ; we must banish all Resentment for Injuries done to us, much less must we seek Revenge for them. With Mary we must chuse the better Part ; and, if we will follow Christ, we must also carry our Cross. Be not startled at this, my Soul, the World is full of Troubles and vexatious Accidents, as well as Pleasures and delightful ones : This Mixture composes all our Harmony ; and such it is, and so forcibly chains us to itself, that we are not able of ourselves to break our Fetters. From this delightful Bondage Christ would rescue us by a total Change of our Affections. This is the Cross we are to carry ; this Victory over ourselves is the Burthen we are to undergo : Neither is it so difficult or heavy as our Imagination represents it to us ; and the Happiness we are to reap for so doing is a Recompence infinitely above our Hopes, or what we can conceive. And can we better spend our Time than in meditating on greater Felicities than this World contains, and in bestowing our whole Hearts on him who will make us Possessors of them ? Search, my Soul, into the inmost Recesses of thyself, and see if thou art disposed to abandon all the tempting Allurements of this World. Say not, with the young Ruler, that thou hast ever been a strict Observer of the Commandments : That's not enough to gain eternal Life ; for, to manifest that thou do'st so, shew thy Promptness to relinquish all to the Poor, give as many Proofs of thy Love of Christ as he has done of his to thee. If he lived in Poverty, it was for thy Sake ; if he is refused a Lodging, and wants a Place to repose his wearied Body in, wearied with travelling thro' Provinces, to instruct an obstinate and malicious People in the Way to Heaven, thou may'st well blush to see him undergo so much for thee, whilst thou repinest to suffer any Thing for thyself. Or, if thou art not yet convinced that these Hardships were for Love

of thee, how will thy faint Expressions of Love to him, or rather of thine own Good, how will they appear in thy Defence at the last Day? Ah! my Soul, they will be but weak Advocates; and be assured that the Object, towards which thy Affections are strongest at thy Departure out of this World, will be their Object for ever.

Forsake then all Love towards this dangerous World, and bestow it on Felicities that will never be taken from thee; keep close to thy Saviour in his Triumph, and remark the Unsteadiness of Human Applauses, even towards him who deserves our whole Hearts, and our eternal Hosannah's. But weep, my Soul, at the sad News he tells thee of his approaching Death; deplore thy Offences, which have largely contributed towards it; be moved at length with his innumerable Sufferings; now heartily resolve to overcome the Perverseness of thy Nature, and so dispose thy Affections, that thou may'st be prepared joyfully to receive the surprising Summons to another State.

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*The Fourth Pascha. The Series of Christ's Passion, his Death and Resurrection, to his Ascension.*

**T**Hursday about Evening, which was the first Day of the Paschal Feast, Jesus came to the House appointed, with the Twelve, who sat down with him, and together eat the Paschal-Lamb. When Supper was done, he wash'd their Feet; presently after he institutes and gives them the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.

Then, with some Trouble, he tells that one of them would betray him the same Night. At last he told Judas that he was the Man, who immediately went out. Soon after, there happened a Contest

amongst the Disciples which of them was the greater, (and consequently farthest from any treacherous Design) which Strife of theirs Christ reproves, and recommends Humility to them, and the new Commandment of mutual Charity.

He tells *Peter*, that he had pray'd for his being steadfast in Faith, and bids him, when he is once converted, to confirm his Brethren. *Peter*, boasting of his Courage and Constancy, is mortify'd by being told by his Master, that he would deny him Thrice. After this mortifying Sentence, Christ comforts them with great Humanity and Kindness, and raises their dejected Spirits by a long Speech to them, which he closeth with a Prayer to his eternal Father for his Apostles, and all the Faithful, as well present as future.

When Jesus had said the most tender and moving Things in the World, he went with his Disciples beyond the Torrent *Cedron* to Mount *Olivet*. In their Way Christ again foretells them that, the same Night, they would all be scandalized in him, which every one utterly deny'd; but *Peter* more confidently than the rest denied that he would be scandalized: But Christ reply'd, that he would sin more grievously than any of them. Afterwards they came to a Farm-place, called *Gethsemane*, where was a Garden.

He and his Disciples went into it, but, chusing out three of them, he went a little further, leaving the rest behind, where he tells them the Agony he is in, and that his Soul is sorrowful, even to Death. However, he bid them stay there and watch, whilst he went a little Distance from them, where he pray'd three several Hours, in such tormenting Pangs, that he sweat Drops of Blood, which run down from him to the Ground. Between each Hour he visits his Three Disciples, whom

whom he finds asleep every Time. Whilst he prays, an Angel appears to comfort him. Coming to his Disciples the third Time, he bids them now sleep on and take their Rest. 'Tis enough, says he, the Son of Man shall be betray'd into the Hands of Sinners. Rise, let us go; behold the Traytor is at hand. The Word was not quite out of his Mouth, when *Judas* appeared at the Head of a Band of Men and Officers, from the Chief-Priest and Pharisees, follow'd by a Rabble with Lanthorns and Torches, Swords, Staves, and other Weapons. Christ meets them, and receives the Traytor's Salute, only saying to him, *Friend, for what art thou come?* *Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a Kiss?* Then he surrenders himself, but charges them not to touch his Disciples. *Peter*, to shew the Courage he had so much boasted of, drew his Sword, and cut off *Malchus*'s Ear, which Jesus immediately healed, with some Reproof to *Peter* for doing so, and reproaching the *Jews* for assaulting a naked Man with such an armed Multitude. When his Disciples saw him a Prisoner, they fled away. And a certain young Man follow'd Jesus, having only a Linen Cloth about his Body, whom when the Officers would have seized, he flung off that loose Garment, and run away naked.

Jesus being now taken, he is led, with his Hands bound, first to *Annas*, and then to *Caiphas*; *Peter* still following at a Distance. Here Christ is first examined about his Doctrine and his Disciples; to which he reply'd, that his Doctrine was no Secret, for he had taught it openly in the Synagogue, and in the Temple; and therefore he might be inform'd of it by those who had heard him. At which one of the Officers struck him, with the Palm of his Hand, upon the Face. After this, the Chief-Priests

Priests and Elders, and all the Council, endeavour'd to find out false Witnesses ; and at length two appeared, who disagreeing in their Testimony, Christ vouchsafed not to make any Reply to their Accusation. But it was demanded of him whether he was Christ ; to which he answered in the Affirmative. Whereupon he was adjudged to be guilty of Death.

Mean while *Peter*, warming himself at the Fire, is known by a Maid who kept the Door, and other Servants, who, three several Times, tax'd him with being a Follower and Disciple of Christ, who as often positively deny'd it, and at last swore that he knew him not ; but, at that very Instant the Cock crowing, he remembered what Jesus told him, who also turn'd back and look'd on him. Struck with Shame and Remorse, he immediately went out and wept bitterly. Jesus being now condemn'd is a thousand Ways ignominiously treated and affronted by all.

The next Morning he is again brought before the Council, and, persisting in the Confession that he was Christ, he is again condemn'd to die ; so that, being bound, he is led to *Pontius Pilate*, the whole Council waiting on him.

*Judas* seeing him condemn'd, repenting what he had done, restored the Thirty Pieces of Silver that he had received, confessing that he had betray'd innocent Blood, and then went away and hang'd himself, and soon after burst. The Chief-Priests, taking the Money, consulted what they should do with it ; for, being the Price of Blood, it was not lawful to lay it in the Treasury. They resolv'd, therefore, to buy with it the Potters-Field, to bury Strangers in, and call'd it *Haceldama*, or, *The Field of Blood*.

The *Jews*, who carry'd Jesus to *Pilate*, at first de-

declined to accuse him. But, when *Pilate* would not have him put to Death without knowing the Cause, they then alledged many Things, but chiefly for saying that he was Christ, a King. *Pilate*, taking him aside, examin'd him upon that Head, and received so great Satisfaction, that he went out to the *Jews* and Chief-Priests, and told them plainly that he found no Cause why he should suffer Death.

This raised a general Murmur among the People, crying that he was a Seducer, and one that stirr'd Sedition throughout all *Jury*, beginning from *Galilee*. *Pilate*, understanding that he was a *Galilean*, (partly to rid his Hands of this troublesome Affair, and partly to oblige *Herod*) sent him to *Herod*, who was Tetrarch of that Province, but at that Time in *Jerusalem*. He received that Favour kindly at *Pilate*'s Hands, and, causing our Saviour to be contemptuously dress'd up in a White Robe, exposed him to the Scoffs and Infolencies of the Soldiery. When that was done, he return'd him to *Pilate* in that ignominious Dres.

*Pilate* so highly obliged *Herod* by gratifying his Curiosity to see Jesus, that they became Friends from that Time. When Christ was come back, *Pilate* assembles the Chief-Priests and Magistrates, and declares to them, that, since neither *Herod* nor he found any Thing in him worthy of Death, he was resolved to dismiss him, when he had inflicted some Punishment on him. But, first, he trys another Way of delivering him; which was to offer them *Barabbas*, a notorious Offender, to be put to Death instead of Christ, not doubting that they would rather set an innocent Man at Liberty than a Man guilty of Murder. But, notwithstanding all that *Pilate* could say in Behalf of Christ, they prefer'd *Barabbas*, and demanded Jesus to be crucified.

*Pilate*, being frustrated of his Expectation, deliver'd Jesus to be scourged. When that was done, the Soldiers gathered about him, and, stripping him, they, in Derision, cloathed him with a Purple Robe, and platted a Crown of Thorns, which they put on his Head, and a Reed in his Hand for a Scepter. In this injurious and tormenting Dress, they kneel before him, mock him, and jeeringly salute him King of the *Jews*. Then they strike him with their Hands, spit upon him, beat him with the Reed, and again salute him King of the *Jews*. After he had suffered these Affronts and Indignities, in a Condition that would have moved Stones to Pity, *Pilate* exposes him to the Sight of the *Jews*, in the Thought that such a Spectacle would have soften'd their Hearts, and have extinguisht their Rage. But, instead of that, they cry'd out, (with an unparallell'd Inhumanity, and an unbridled Fury) *Crucify him! Crucify him!* and, to colour their mad, hair-brain'd Actions with some Shew of Reason, they say that he is guilty of Death, because he said that he was the Son of God. *Pilate*, however, endeavoured to release him; but, the *Jews* threatening to bring an Accusation of Treason against him, if he released Christ, he was overcome by the Terror of their Menacess; therefore, yielding to his own Fears and their importunate Clamours, he went into the Judgment-Hall, to pronounce the Sentence of Death against Jesus.

Being already seated, and about to give the Sentence, his Wife sent to him her Desire that he would desist. *Pilate*, therefore, pleading once more for his Liberty, but without Success, and finding the Tumult increase, he washes his Hands before all the People, signifying, that he was free from any Share in the Blood of that just Man, whilst they, with fearful Imprecations, draw his

Blood

Blood upon their own Heads, and the Heads of their Posterity. When *Pilate* heard what they said, he delivers Jesus up to them to be crucify'd, saying, *It should be as they required.*

Thus condemn'd, they again strip our Saviour of his Purple Robe, deride him, and put on his own Garments. Then they lay his Crofs on his Shoulder, and lead him out of the City to be crucify'd. In the Way, as they were conducting him, they laid his Crofs upon *Simon*, a *Cyrenian*, that they might make more haste to the Place of Execution. A great Company of People followed; the Women bewailed and lamented him. Jesus, turning towards them, bids them cease to lament him, and turn their Tears and Lamentations on themselves and Children; for a fevere Revenge would, 'e're long, fall upon their Heads.

When he was come to Mount *Calvary*, with the two Thieves in his Company, they gave him to drink Wine mingled with Myrrh and Gall; which when he had tasted, he would not drink. At the third Hour they crucify'd him between the two Thieves, who accompany'd him. Upon the Cross he prays for his Crucifiers. By *Pilate*'s Appointment this Inscription is fix'd on the Top of the Cross, *Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews*, which was written in *Hebrew, Latin, and Greek*. The *Jews*, who read it, were offended, and desired *Pilate* to alter it, but he would not.

Then the Soldiers took his Garments, which they divided into four, and cast Lots for them. In the mean Time, the Pontifices and Soldiers, looking on, insulted him, whilst he was dying, in very opprobrious Terms; which one of the Thieves also did, but the other reproved him for it, confesses Christ to be God, and obtains of him to be admitted into Paradise. Then beholding his Mother stand-

ftanding near the Cross, he recommends her to the Care of the Disciple whom he loved.

Whilst these Things pass'd, the Sixth Hour being come, an universal Darkness spread itself over the whole Earth until the Ninth Hour; about which Time Jesus cry'd with a loud Voice, *Eli, Eli, lamma-sabacthani?* *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Soon after, he said, *I thirst.* The Soldiers, turning all into Jest, offered him some Vinegar to drink; which as soon as he had tasted, he said, *It is consummated*, and once more raising his Voice, for the last Time, he said, *Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit.* Then his Head sinking down, he gave up the Ghost.

Immediately the Vail of the Temple was rent in two from the Top to the Bottom, and the Earth trembled, the Rocks were split, and the Graves opened, from whence issued many Bodies of the Saints after his Resurrection, and went into the Holy City, where they appeared to many. The *Centurion*, who stood over-against him, when he saw these Things, glorified God, confessing, that this was indeed a just Man, and was certainly the Son of God. The rest, struck with Fear and Amazement, went away smiting their Breasts, and saying, *Truly, this was the Son of God.* The *Jews*, by reason the Sabbath was at Hand, obtain'd Leave to break their Legs; which was done to the two Thieves, but not to Christ, because he was already dead; but one of the Soldiers pierced his Side with a Launce, from which Wound immediately issued Blood and Water.

After this, when the Evening was come, *Joseph of Arimathea* went to Pilate and begg'd the Body of Jesus, with Permission to bury it; which being granted, he wrapp'd it in a fine, new Linen Cloth, with Spices, according to the *Jewish* Fashion; which

which done, with the Assistance of *Nichodemus*, he lays the Body in a new Monument of his own, which was hewn out of a Rock, and roll'd a Stone over. This Place was marked by *Mary Magdalen*, by *Mary* the Mother of *James* the Less and *Joseph*, and *Salome*, and by the Mother of the Sons of *Zebdee*. The next Day, that is, the Sabbath, with *Pilate's* Consent, the Pharisees seal up the Sepulchre, and set a Guard about it, to the end his Disciples should not steal away his Body, and then report that he was risen from the Dead.

### Reflections.

*Behold, a grateful Recompence for so much Love !  
so much Pains for so many and so great Sufferings !  
Behold, a glorious Conclusion to such marvellous Beginnings ! Behold, a Life exposed to Hardships, Labour, and the Malice of Men, breathing its last in Torments ! and behold, my Soul, thy Lord most barbarously crucify'd, after a most vile, bloody, and inhuman Treatment ! But thou, O my Soul, thou art the Occasion of all this ; thy Love to the World was so deeply rooted, so riveted, so inveterate, that every Step and Circumstance of his painful Sufferings, his Miracles and Preaching, and his Death and Passion, were absolutely necessary for thy Salvation. Complain, my Soul, complain no more of thy Adversity, of thy Crosses, and of thy Sufferings, which thou hast but too justly merited, which thy Sins have pull'd upon thy Head, and which yet thou may'st convert into a Blessing, by making a right Use of them, by letting them be a means to wean thy Affections from this World, whose Delights have such bitter Allays, and make thee seek for, and embrace those Pleasures which are truly such, and which are everlasting.*

*Turn then thy Eyes, and view thy Lord amidst the  
Shades*

Shades of Night, in the Garden of Gethsemane, most strangely transfigured before thee, not into Glory, as on the Mountain, but into a Man of Sorrow, into an Object, my Soul, which thou oughtest not to behold without pouring out a Flood of penitential Tears, for every Drop of Blood, which the painful Agony thy Lord is in makes him sweat, and trickling from the Pores of his afflicted Body, waters the Earth about him. What hast thou ever done, my Soul, towards thy own Salvation, that bears any Proportion with this Agony of thy Saviour's, which so movingly calls upon thee to look upon him in this Extremity of Misery, (which nevertheless is but the Beginning of his future Passion) and measures the Greatness of his Love to thy Happiness by the Condition to which it has reduced him? Oh! my dear Lord, how can I behold that Divine Face, on which Angels rejoice to look, all bathed in Blood, running in Purple Streams upon the Ground, without the utmost Confusion that can seize a Soul, which yet retains the least Spark of its Humanity? But why, my Lord, are you so lavish of that Sacred Blood, each Drop of which is so precious, and of such inestimable, intrinsic Value? I murmur, O my God, with much more Reason, at this unvaluable Waste and Profusion, than did the spiteful Jews at the pious Magdalen's Ointment which she poured upon your Sacred Feet. But reflect, my Soul, and consider seriously with thyself; thy Saviour's precious Blood, tho' never so prodigally shed, is no where wasted nor spent in vain, but where it meets with Ingratitude, where it meets with Souls insensible of so great Testimonies of his Love, and where they resolutely pursue those Courses from which he endeavoured to dissuade the World by his Miracles and Preaching.

Suffer not then, my Soul, thy Saviour's dear Blood to be lost upon thee, but repay his Love of thee with that of thy whole Heart; that's all he requires at thy

thy Hands in return for all his Sufferings : The An-  
guish in which thou seest him for thy Sake, thy own  
Interest, and thy eternal Welfare, most earnestly jo-  
licit thee to it. What Heart can be so stubborn, so  
relentless, as not to be softened, not to yield at such a  
powerful Instance of the most real Love ! But, if we  
meditate on what yet remains, we shall encounter such  
tragical Passages as would move a Heart of Adamant  
to Sorrow.

After three Hours' Prayer in this bitter Agony, he  
is betray'd into the Hands of those Officers who were  
sent to apprehend him. He voluntarily surrenders  
himself up to the Mercy of these bloody-minded Peo-  
ple, who immediately bind his Hands, and hurry him  
from one Court of Judicature to another ; but he is  
declared innocent by all his Judges. This increases  
the Rage of his Enemies, whom nothing but his Death  
can satisfy. And here my Pen finds itself too weak to  
proceed in its Undertaki'g. No Thought can form to  
itself a true Idea of the future tragical Events, and  
to attempt the genuine Description of them is a Task  
too great for all Human Capacity. Yet behold, O my  
Soul ! behold an Object the most moving that ever Eye  
beheld ! thy dear Lord, thy most holy Pontifex, thy  
more than Father, thy loving Saviour, and thy God,  
in the Court of Pilate, is become a Sacrifice to the  
Hellish Rage of Human Monsters ! a most bloody Sa-  
crifice ! Alas ! he is stripp'd, he is scourg'd, he is  
buffeted, he is spit upon, and he is crown'd with  
Thorns. Thus wounded from Head to Foot, or rather  
but one entire Wound throughout his Body ; thus torn  
and mangled, thus bloody, the King, not of the Jews  
only, but of Heaven and Earth, is exposed to the  
View of that ungrateful, that relentless People. And  
canst thou too, my Soul, be a Spectator without being  
struck with a Sacred Horror, and perfect Detestation  
of the Authors and Actors in this sacrilegious Tragedy ?

Where then are thy Tears, thy Tears of Sorrow and Contrition, thy perfect Hatred of thy Sins, for which these Things are come to pass? If Shame makes thee cast down thine Eyes, and not dare to lift them up to see the most cruel Effects of which thy Sins have been the barbarous Occasion, give Ear at least to his Complaints, O all you who pass by, behold and see if there is any Grief comparable to my Grief! For thy Sake, O Passenger, I am thus inhumanly treated: Because I loved and endeavoured thy eternal Welfare, I am become an Object of Scorn and Malice; and, because I have spoken so much Truth, I am going to shed the Remainder of my Blood, and yield up my latest Breath on the Cross. Bewail not me, O Passenger, tho' my Pains are great, but bewail thine own Crimes, for which I suffer them. The World and thine own Conscience shall, one Day, bear Witness of the many and great Proofs that I have given of my Love to thee. Love me at least for thine own Sake, if thou canst not do it for mine. Prostrate thyself, O my Soul, (for thou art the Passenger to whom these Complaints and Advice are address'd) and humbly adore thy abominably affronted Lord, thy King, and thy God; make Protestations of eternal Fidelity in thy Love of him above all Things, and implore his dying Benediction upon thee,

Pity the Jewish Insensibility at so deplorable a Spectacle before their Eyes, able to have soften'd the Hearts of Tygers, or what was most inhuman. They cry, Away with him, Crucify him! Crucify him! We will have no other King but Cæsar; let his Blood be upon our Heads, and the Heads of our Posterity. Good God! what transported Madness, what unheard-of Execrations are these! Observe, my Soul, with what Fury they pursue their Hellish Purpose: They load his Shoulders with a heavy Cross, too heavy for his Strength to bear: Simon, the Cyrenian, is

at last compell'd to undertake the Carriage of the Burthen to the Place of Execution. Here our Saviour's Wounds are all afresh torn open with the violent stripping off his Cloaths, his Hands and Feet bored thro', and fasten'd to the Cross with Nails, which, being rear'd into the Air, is rudely pitch'd into the Earth, with a tormenting Jolt to that delicate Body which the Holy Ghost had fram'd, the People and Soldiers in the mean while sending forth their Shouts and insolent Reproaches. The whole Weight of his Body is now sustain'd by four cruel Wounds; in which painful Condition he charitably pardons the Authors of all his Misery, and remains some Hours in that afflicting State, (loaded with more Affronts and repeated Injuries) 'till he yielded up his Soul into the Hands of his eternal Father. Good God! how hast thou abandon'd thy only Son! how great is thy Love to us, for whose Sake thou hast thus abandon'd him to innumerable Sufferings, to an ignominious and most painful Death! And what, my Soul, what wilt thou do now thy Lord is crucify'd and dead, but crucify'd and dead for thy Redemption. To convince thee of his real Affection, to attest the Truth of his Doctrine, to fulfil the Prophecies, and to engage a reciprocal Love from thee, he has added this last Testimony to so many others. And what greater Proofs, what more undoubted Expressions, could Love itself find out, by which to manifest its Sincerity, its Purity, and its Ardour? Take then, my Soul, a Resolution worthy of thee, and utterly disengage thyself from all thy loose and criminal Affections, (and all are such where God is not the Object) raise in thy Heart an everlasting Monument (alas! I cannot say it is a Place where never any Thing was laid, for Vanity and Folly have too often been harboured there) to thy dead Lord, there let him live, there let him reign absolutely for ever. If at any Time the Pleasures of the World return

turn to thy *Imagination* in their most alluring Forms and tempting Shapes, look upon them as *Enemies* to thy *Happiness*, as *Disturbers* of thy *Tranquility*, and as *Crimes* which were the *Cause* of the *Death* and *Passion* of thy dear, dread *Lord*, to whom thou hast given the entire *Possession* of thyself; which thou oughtest to have done in thy most early *Years*. *Deplore* then the *Loss* of so much *Time*; *deplore* the miserable *State*, which thy misplaced *Affections* had reduced thee, and make a *Sacrifice* of them all at the *Foot* of the *Holy Cross*. *Thy God* has promised *Paradise* to the *repenting Thief*; and be assured, *my Soul*, that thy *Repentance* will not go unrewarded. *Despair* not because thou seest thy *Saviour* dead and in his *Grave*, but *mourn* for his *Absence*, and confidently expect the fulfilling of his promised *Resurrection*; wait at his *Holy Sepulchre*, that thou may'st gain that *Jubilee*, that *Deliverance* from thy *Sins* which he is gone to distribute to the *Holy Patriarchs and Prophets*, who have long *reposed* in *Abraham's Bosom*, in *Expectation* of this *blessed Day*.

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### *The Resurrection.*

**T**HE Evening being past, the Women prepare their Spices to anoint the Body of Jesus; and for this Purpose (on Sunday Morning early, which was the Day after the Sabbath) they went to the Monument with the Spices which they had prepared. As they drew near, an Angel descending removed the Stone from the Mouth of the Sepulchre, the Earth trembling at the same Time: At which the Guard, struck with a Panic, fell to the Ground half dead. In the mean Time, the Women, as they walk'd along, were debating among themselves how they should uncover the Sepulchre, be-

because the Stone was very great ; but, being come to the Place, they found it roll'd away, and an Angel sitting upon it clad all in White, and his Countenance like Lightning.

He bid them not be afraid, and told them that Jesus was already risen from Death, encouraging them, at the same Time, to go into the Sepulchre, which they would find to be empty, and ordered them to let the Disciples know as much. They entered in some Consternation, where they found two Angels, who told them the same News ; but the Body of our Lord was not there. *Mary Magdal'en* ran out, and so did the other Women, and, finding the Apostles, told them that our Lord's Body was taken away, and that Angels had appeared to them, who said that he was alive : Upon which, *Peter* and *John* ran to see the Truth of what they heard, where not finding the Body, they really believed that some-body had taken it away : But *Mary*, who return'd with the Apostles, stay'd behind at the Sepulchre, deplored the Loss, and, looking about to find it, saw two Angels, who ask'd her why she wept : *Because*, said she, *they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.* Afterward, turning about, she saw *Jesus*, whom at first she took for the Gardener : He bid her tell his Brethren that he was risen from the Dead : She went, therefore, and told the Disciples what she had seen and heard ; but they believed her not. It also happened that, as the other Women were astonished, two Men stood by them in glittering Apparel, who, perceiving the Fright they were in, bid them not be dismay'd, nor seek there for Jesus, of *Nazareth*, who was risen according to his Word : *Go, therefore, said they, and tell his Disciples, and Peter, that he is risen.* In their Way Jesus meets them, and salutes them with *All Hail* : They presently

fently approach him, and, falling down to embrace his Feet, adored him. Jesus bid them *not fear, but go and tell my Brethren that I would have them go into Galilee*: Which they reported to the Eleven, and all the rest, who were still incredulous, and thought that the Women doated.

Whilst these Things pass'd, the Watch, which had been frighten'd at the Monument, came into the City, and told the Chief-Priests all that had happened: But they, to smother the Truth, corrupted these Fellows with Money, and made them report, that his Disciples had stolen the Body away, *which Falshood the Jews believe to this Day*. The Apostles remaining still in their Incredulity, Christ appears to *Peter*, and then to two Disciples in their Way to *Emaus*, as they were discoursing of the late Transactions. When they return'd to *Jerusalem*, and the Apostles were all met together, they acquaint them with the Apparition. The same Day, being Sunday, in the Evening, Jesus appeared to them all but *Thomas*, who was absent, and stood in the Midst of them, shewing them his Hands and Side, which were wounded with the Spear, and after that he eat and drank with them.

*Thomas* perfisiting in his Unbelief, affirming that, unless he saw the Print of the Nails in his Hands, and put his Finger into them, and his Hand into the wound in his Side, he would not believe, Jesus, eight Days after, appeared again to them, when *Thomas* was amongst them, and offered him the Satisfaction he had desired, which perfectly convinc'd him. The Disciples being gone into *Galilee*, according to their Master's Command, whilst they were fishing in the Sea of *Tiberias*, Jesus appeared to them on the Shoar, but was not known by them 'till *John* discover'd him to *Peter*, saying, *It is our Lord!* After which they dined with him; and, when

when Dinner was done, Jesus commits the Care of his Flock to *Peter*, and foretells him what Sort of Martyrdom he was to undergo. Then he appointed them to go up to the Mountain, where he appeared to 500 Brethren at once, who, when they saw him, adored him ; yet some doubted. Then he appeared to *James* ; and after that to all the Apostles, at which Time he tells them that all Power is in his Hands, and therefore gives them Authority and his Command to preach and teach the Gospel to all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the *Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost* ; and acquaints them with the Signs that will follow those who believe, promising to be with them to the End of the world.

Lastly, Having conversed with them during 40 Days, instructing them in what related to the Kingdom of Heaven, on the 40th Day he leads them to *Bethania*, upon Mount *Olivet*, where he reproved their curious Enquiry about the Time when he would restore the Kingdom of *Israel* ; and then, lifting up his Hands, he gave them his Benediction, and ascended into Heaven, where he sits at the Right Hand of his Father, co-operating with the Preachers of the Gospel, and confirming the word with Signs following.

### Reflections.

*Raise thy dejected Looks, my Soul, and drooping Hopes ; behold, our Lord is risen from the Grave, triumphing over Death, and all the Malice of his Enemies. See how just he is to his Word, and faithful to his Promise. He salutes thee with his woned Sweetness and Affability, All hail ! Fear not ! 'Tis I, the same whom thou hast diligently followed thro' the whole Course of my Preaching, whom thou hast seen work*

so many Miracles in Confirmation of my Doctrine, whose Life was a Sea of Troubles, and whose Death was accompanied with all Sorts of Torments, Ignominy, and Affronts, which I oft' foretold would come to pass, as a Thing absolutely necessary for the Salvation of Mankind; and now I'm risen from the Dead, as I also foretold I shoud. Be not afraid, it's no Vision which thou seest; behold the very Wounds by which I was nailed to the Cross. You also shall, one Day, reassume your Body; and then the Resurrection of all Mankind shall be fulfill'd. Cast thyself, O my Soul, at thy Redeemer's Feet, embrace them, kiss those dear Wounds, adore him with a most profound Respect and Submission, humbly beseeching that thy Resurrection may be to Happiness, that the Remainder of thy Life may be spent in continued Acts of Divine Love, and that the last Moment of it may be such, that the Stroke of Death shall only loosen thee from the Clay Obstacle that hindered thy more perfect Union to him; and then eagerly fly, with all the Wings of Love and Desire, into the bless'd Enjoyment of all Happiness with which thy Saviour will reward thy Fidelity.

But, tho' we must, in the mean Time, dispose ourselves once more, my Soul, to lose the Company of our Lord, yet he will not leave us Orphans; he'll not leave us exposed to the dangerous Temptations of the World, without leaving his Holy Spirit to guide and protect his future Church, his Spirit of Truth, Unity and Holiness. Since our Saviour must return to Heaven, from whence he came, let not us, my Soul, lose one Moment of the Time he has to stay, but improve each Part of it to our true Advantage; let us not be absent at any Time when he vouchsafes to appear, that his dear Person may imprint in us an eternal Character of Love, and that his Discourse may add a glowing Warmth and Vigour to thy Affection. He'll open to thee the Meaning of the Scriptures which foretold the coming

of the Messias ; he'll declare to thee the Necessity of it, of his Death and Passion, and of his Resurrection, and Ascension into Heaven. Let us lodge those Mysteries in our Hearts ; let us carefully remember his holy Lessons and Instructions ; and on Mount Olivet receive his farewell Benediction on our Knees, there behold him ascending into Heaven before thine Eyes, where he will appear once more to judge the Living and Dead. The ungrateful World will then behold him to their utter Confusion ; but those, who loved him here, whose Hearts have followed him to Heaven, will rejoice to see that glorious, dreadful Day.

Protect, O Lord, and preserve thy Church, according to thy Promise, in the Spirit of Holiness, Truth, and Unity ; convert those who, by being Enemies to her, are equally so to their own Happiness, and the Faith which thou establishedst in the world. May thy Kingdom come ! and my poor Soul, thro' a perfect and constant Love of thee, be prepared to receive the welcome Invitation to sit at thy Right Hand for ever !

*The E N D.*

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